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MY SOLDIER BOY

MRS. JOHN ARCHIBALD MORISON

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My Soldier Boy

And Other Poems

BY

MRS. JOHN ARCHIBALD MORISON

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MY SOLDIER BOY

MY SOLDIER BOY

Soldier boy, O soldier boy,
  Strong and brave and true,
You're off to fight for England
  And for the Empire too.

O soldier boy, I'm proud,
  I'm proud, I don't deny,
Tho' in my throat a tightness
  And tears will fill my eyes.

I give him up to England
  O England don't you see
I love, I love thee, England,
  My heart I send to thee.

My brave and true and strongest
  Pure gold without alloy,
O England, England, England,
  I gave my soldier boy.

A SOLDIER'S WIFE

HE's gone! It seems as if the world stood still
Time's lost its rhythm: Lengthening hours too long,
To-morrow I must work, I'll have my fill
To-day of loneliness, it may be wrong
But naught's worth while when he's away,
His chair and book are wrapt in silence
And seem to wait and listen all the day,
With loneliness and waiting that is tense
I strive to hear the step that comes not,
And then I fall asleep and think he's near,
I wake and smother back the tears: the sought
Is far away—O GOD, TO HIM BE NEAR.

YPRES

Ypres, April 22-24, 1915.

IMMORTAL they who won Ypres!
O Canada! Thy sons untried,
Died as heroes ever died.
Was it the blood of all their sires
Calling them on and on through fire?
Exhaustion, agony, despair,
A deadly gas that filled the air.
Nor flinched, nor ever thought retreat,
These lads who did not know defeat,
Fought on and on until they won.
O Canada, thy worthy sons!
The midnight hour in that dark wood
Their souls in exaltation stood;
They vanquished death: Immortal they,
Who saved the Empire at Ypres.

"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE"

SOMEWHERE in France
Marked by a cross
That is all, save the heart loss,
Still in his grave he lies
Smiled on by sunny skies
Wept on by cold bleak rain
While on clear nights in vain
The silent stars are tapers lit
While here I sit lone, lone and knit.

Somewhere in France
No hope, no chance I see
Can ever bring him back to me
Only a silence without despair
Proud he lies a hero there.
The rainbow will smile above it
The wild rose too will bloom a bit
Somewhere in France.

France and my soul are knit
Richer the soil of it
Where thousands of brave men die
There side by side they lie
Never again to his native land
Always to rest with that noble band
Lilies of France with hearts of gold
Stand guard o'er the graves of these heroes bold.

ARE YE WORTHY?

Are ye worthy, ye of the British Empire,
Are ye worthy the men that die?
Worthy the pain and suffering
Worthy the sacrifice?
Ye of the British Empire, are ye worthy
All this for you;
They are willing and glad to do.

There are wounded and suffering in Flanders
And out on the Dardanelles,
Not to speak of the gallant sailors
Their vigil ye know it well.
Are ye worthy, ye of the British Empire
Are ye worthy we ask it again
Worthy such sorrow and pain?

And after they've saved the Empire
Are ye worthy to make and to frame
(Worthy the blood and the fire)
An Empire untarnished in name?
Worthy the pain and the suffering
Worthy the men who die. . . .
Worthy the blood and the sorrow
Worthy the sacrifice?

GOD SAVE OUR EMPIRE *

GOD save our Empire now
And let her never bow
  At tyrant's knee—
Preserve her; strong for right
And ever brave to fight
Defending truth with might
  While Empires be.

God guard our Empire long
Keep her both great and strong
  Dauntless and free—
Send her a gracious dower
Help her in danger's hour
Protect her mighty power
  On land and sea.

**God Save Our Empire, My Soldier Boy, A Soldiers' Wife* and "*Somewhere in France*" have received Honourable Mention with High Commendation in the Prize Competition in the "Bookman," London.

JUNE

O JUNE so fair!
O June so fleet!
Your hours go by on winged feet.

O June so blue!
O June so green!
With just some fleecy clouds between.

O June so sweet!
O June so fair!
While buds are bursting everywhere.

O June for love!
O June for joy!
And June for beauty, unalloy.

SUCCESS

To wake while yet the day is young,
To feel that there are songs unsung,
To find your work each rising sun,
To know the joy of work well done.

To catch the joy each passing day,
The throbbing joy of life, I say,
In sun and wind and rain and sky,
And lift a thankful heart on high.

To know always that life is sweet
With love and home there's no defeat
Success in life! You've found the clue,
Believe me, friend, I tell you true.

AUGUST

FULL to the brim is summer's cup
With sunshine joy filled up,
The sun beats down on sandy shores
The waters lap idly o'er and o'er,
The earth is warm and dry and sweet
All is bathed in a solar heat;
'Neath great wide stretch of sunny sky
The vast broad sweep of waters lie.
Now are summer's hopes complete
Now the rest of contentment sweet.

NOVEMBER

THERE's always a promise of better things
'Tis November that holds the buds of spring.
There's always a promise of better things
Tho' over your life the shadows cling.
When all the summer's joy is gone
And clouds hang thick for days along,
The fog is damp and cold and gray
The joy of life is behind you say;
Just look at the bushes and buds on the way,
The buds are forming already for May,
They are the promise of coming spring
There's always a promise of better things.
In the winter that makes your life so bare
Look well and you'll find the buds hidden there.

AUTUMN

THERE is magic in her colors and witcheries abound
And soft the leaves are whispering that drop upon the ground.
The maple trees are making to crown her noble head
A floating scarf, of crimson, of gold and flaming red.
While fading ferns give fragrance, the strong and sturdy oak
Will toss upon her shoulders his own deep colored cloak.
The beeches and the birches are weaving yards of gold,
And the bittersweet and woodbine make draperies untold.
While out upon the silent hills that only seem to wait
The long blue veils are making to wrap her up when late.
The color and the witchery that everywhere abound.
O close your eyes and listen to that soft rustling sound.
The witchery of color! What joy there is in sight!
But 'tis what autumn makes me feel that gives my heart delight.

WINTER

Oft have I pitied one and all
Who shut themselves in city wall
And know not that though summer's fled
Winter and beauty now are wed.

Oft have I seen the sky as blue
And seen the river run as true,
Or loved the golden sunny noon
As in fair June.

I've seen the sunshine on the hill
And heard the birds in joyous thrill
And seen the sunset O so tender!
In bleak December.

The frozen road makes easy pace
The cold clear air upon my face
And I am gay and young, remember,
'Tis cold December.

SUMMER

O WHY was the summer so sweet?
'Twas made of dawns and of calm noontides
And sunsets where colors reside.
The beautiful peace of the deep purple night
And the glorious joy of sunlight:
The friendship of stars, of wind and of trees
Good comrades indeed were these;
The sound on the pane of the sweet gentle rain
That comes like an old refrain,
The soft night breeze that sang in the trees
And told of the murmuring sea:
The love in your eyes that time did defy
'Twas that made a summer for me.

DEATH

O DEATH! come not near,
Take not from me the one so dear.
Is there no bribe you take?
Is there no challenge I can make
Will keep thee back?

O Death! stand back,
Cans't thou not wait?
Beyond thy gate, eternal silence is the fate.
My gold, my all with thee I stake
The price of just one day.
O Death cans't thou not wait
But one more day?

THE MOUNTAINS

THE mountains lift their heads on high
To hear the music of the sky
They stand so strong, so firm, so still
The storms break over them at will
They care not for the tempest blow
For stormy blast or icy snow:
Serene, let all the world go by
They hear the music of the sky.

MORNING

SUNSHINE on the river
Shining on the mill,
Just a little mist
Hanging on the hill;
Cattle seek their pasture
Where the grass is new,
Every bird is singing
Of its love anew;
Pretty little white sails
Fallen fast asleep
Wait for morning breeze
To make them dance and leap;
All the grass and daisies
Wet with shining dew,
Wonderful the sunshine
Every day renewed.

A SUMMER EVENING

THE summer sun is setting
And the winds are quiet and still
While the shades of blue are deepening
On the slope of yonder hill.
The little birds are singing
In the trees an even song
And I hear the bells a-tinkling
As the cattle come along;
The light so quiet and pleasing
And the fragrance from the flowers:
My heart to beauty yielding
Feels the sweetness of the hour.

THE EVENING OF LIFE

When the sun of life is setting
And the strife of life is still,
And we know our journey's over,
And we are waiting for His will,
May that even be as peaceful
As a summer eve is calm,
While we come into the harbor
At our gracious Lord's command.

MARCH

O March, we love thy lengthening days
With lovely sunshine gladdening rays
And though the winter to thee cling
We'll journey with thee to the spring.

INDIAN SUMMER

SUMMER's gone: We said good-bye
Saw her going with a sigh
Saw the birds fly south away
Saw the sky grow sad and grey
Then upon our mist and rain
Summer turned her face again;
There was pathos in her gaze
In her eyes a misty haze
But 'twas summer, and her smile
Into gladness did beguile.
Those who have no vision clear
Said "Ah! Indian Summer's here."
We who knew her face so well
Knew she'd turned to say farewell.

BABY MINE

WHERE did that little baby go
I used to love and cuddle so?
She did not die or run away
But just grew bigger day by day;
And now in place of Baby Mine
I've got a child to run and climb.
Where did that little baby go
I used to love and cuddle so?
Then came a child with books and skates
Would rather play with little mates,
She's grown so big, she's grown so tall
I wonder if she's mine at all.
Where did that little baby go
I used to love and cuddle so?

SPRING DAYS

THE sun is beaming
Water streaming
Cocks are crowing
Cattle lowing
Birds are singing
Earth is ringing
With the glad springtime.
Clouds are flying
Fields are drying
Flowers are budding
Sunshine flooding
Buds are bursting
Earth is thirsting
For the glad springtime.

THE TRUE FRIEND

YOUR friendship has not faltered
And your kindness never altered
Nor in your thinking aught but true
No need explain it all to you
In storm and stress you stood beside
Fortune frowned when scandal lied
Friends forsook and hope denied
"Now let me help whate'er betide"
Though fortune smiles still you are true
I thank the Lord each night for you.

A RECOLLECTION

WHEN I was just a little tot
We sisters slept in one small cot:
Our granny dear would come upstairs
"O Bairnies, have you said your prayers?"

And this each night was what she said
And snugly tucked us up in bed
Then patting back my wayward hair
"O Bairnies, have you said your prayer?"

But sorrow crept inside our door:
Then first I learned the face she wore
My heart was filled with pain and fear
"Come say a prayer, my Bairnie dear."

Since then the years have passed away
Yet still I seem to hear her say,
When days are dark and filled with care
"O Bairnie, have you said your prayer?"

MUSIC

It is singing all around overhead
I hear it in the wind I have said.
In the rustling of the leaves that are dead

It is singing everywhere. At the dawn,
You can hear it in the twilight pale and wan
And in the golden sunshine all day long.

In the storm, in the mist and in the rain
Though you may not know the sound there's the
strain
Of music. If you catch it you have gain

In the waters as they break on the shore
In the bloom of the rose bush by the door
You can hear it singing o'er and o'er.

In the moonlight as it floods through the trees
When it shines upon the waters of the seas
Everywhere it's whispering in the breeze.

Everywhere around it's afloat
Sometimes, I catch far off—just a note
Or perhaps—it's an echo, so remote,
Of those heavenly songs that fly
Like sweet incense to the sky;
For it's everywhere on earth and on high.

REMEMBRANCE

Forget! Ah no, life's cares dispel
But always it comes back to me
The thought of thee! Ah well,
The thought of thee, like music sweet
Heard 'mid the din of city street
Then lost amid the strife,
So memory breaks into my life.

I LOVE THEE

I LOVE thee, O I love thee, as the sunrise loves the morn,
I love thee as the birds love when the golden light is born,
I love thee, ah I love thee, as the night clouds love the star,
I love thee, yes I love thee, though thou shine undimmed afar,
I love thee, O I love thee, as the wavelets love the shore,
I love, I love, I love thee, I love thee and adore.

I love thee, yes I love thee, as the color loves the rose,
I love thee, as the sun a hilltop, when the day is near its close,
I love thee with the tenderness of sunset's afterglow
When all the warmth of color breaks o'er my soul. I know,
I love thee with the steadfastness of cliffs where oceans sweep
I love thee and eternally my love for thee will keep.

LOVE

When the mount to Mahomet has run
When the earth has forgotten the sun
When the work of the world is all done
Then shall I cease to love thee.

When I've mortgaged my castles in Spain
When laughter and life are in vain
When dreams come true in the main
Then shall I cease to love thee.

When the birds come not back in the spring
When the lilacs no perfume shall bring
When the moonlight no magic shall fling
Then shall I cease to love thee.

When my ships come home from the sea
When the tides all run and are free
And time itself shall not be
Then shall I cease to love thee.

LINES FOR A GUEST BOOK

I THANK thee for thy kind behest
Which bade me be thy welcome guest
For hospitality so fair
Of which I've had a royal share.

For thy hospitalitie
To this goodly companie
Ere we make our farewell bow,
Let us thank thee here and now.

AN AUTUMN NIGHT

THE brilliant silent stars look down
Upon the sleeping wind-swept town
The dead leaves fall upon the ground
Whirl through the streets with dreary sound.

SPRINGTIME IN THE CITY

ONLY a bunch of violets wild
Pinned on the coat of a little child
As she passed me by in the dusty street
But it opened to me a vista sweet.

LIFE'S REQUIREMENT

A LITTLE work, a little play,
A few friends true upon the way,
Enough to eat, enough to wear
And just a little bit to share,
Some one to love and be beloved
A faith and trust in God above.
A roof my own above my head,
A place to lie in when I'm dead;
With health and hope and courage grand
What more from life can kings command.

GOLDENROD

Pretty little Goldenrod
Shakes her graceful head and nods,
Nods farewell to summer gay
Autumn now is on the way.

Straight and graceful does she stand
First of autumn's heralds grand
Bright and beautiful are they
Autumn now is on the way.

Like the sun when day is done
Thou art summer's setting sun;
Soon the tints will fade to grey
Autumn now is on the way.

AN EASTER GREETING

May all your griefs and sorrows
Be buried deep to-day;
And all your pain and sadness
Lie low in the grave for aye:
But may there rise triumphant
Into your heart anew
A joy and love and gladness
And peace, sweet peace, for you.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

May joy and hope and happiness
Be yours this coming year;
May love of those that you love
Bring to your heart much cheer.
May you have the best of blessings
That this round year contains,
May you know much of its gladness
And but little of its pain.

A CHILD'S PRAYER

O Jesus!
Thou who loved the children
And held them in thine arms
Look on me and love me
And keep me safe from harm.
Thou who blessed the children
That gathered round thy knee
Look on me and bless me
And keep my life for thee.

EASTER

THE garden grave, Gethsemane, are past
Easter morn! And joy had come at last.
False friends forgot: And the crown of thorn
In the glory of the resurrection morn.

A garden grave, Gethsemane, for me?
An Easter morn for those who trust in thee?
Sorrow and pain are o'er, then by His grace
Hail Easter morn! To wake and see His face.

CHRISTMAS

THE spirit of Christmas!
O come let it reign
In church and in market
In street and in lane.
So long as the earth
Has sadness and tears
So long as the Christ
Brings comfort and cheer
To hearts that are weary
And lonely, I hold
The spirit of Christmas
Shall never grow old.

ONLY A TEACHER

Only a teacher
But to her it is given
To open the eyes
To a glorious vision
And no one again
Can close out the light
To minds opened once
To a heavenly sight.

Only a teacher
But to her it is given
To plant in fresh souls
Some seeds from heaven
That shall glow in the darkness
And even in strife
That shall blossom for aye
In eternal life.

HOPE

Hope is a lovely maiden
That comes to us all laden
With joy and love and sweet success
And all that seems in life to bless.
Sometimes she does deceive us
And then we bid her leave us
But if she really does depart
Night settles down upon the heart;
But soon she comes back creeping
And soothes away our weeping
And thus while times we doubt her
We cannot live without her
This lovely little maiden
With gifts of life so laden.

THE NEW-MOWN HAY

SWEET is the smell of new-mown hay
The reapers are cutting so gaily to-day
It smells of sunshine of showers and dew
Clover and daisies and buttercups too
It smells as if the grass had caught
Some of the south breeze fragrance that brought
Spring's frail blossoms out of the trees
Kept it all summer, now lends it to me
The smell so sweet of the new-mown hay
Is the garnered sweetness of summer days.

WHEN AUTUMN COMES

THERE'S a crimson leaf in the maple tree
There's a song in my heart this sight to see
For autumn I love so fair is she.

There's a touch of gold in my garden fair
There are golden thoughts in my heart so rare
For autumn is here her beauty I share.

There's a purple touch by the highway road
There's joy for my heart's forgotten its load
For autumn yields beauty where no man sowed.

There's a bracing breath by the west wind sent
There are shadows deep on the hills cloud lent
Autumn has come and my heart's content.

WHITE CAPS

THE wind came out of the north and blew
And then on the waters the white caps grew,
The water was black and the caps were white
And it looked like an army coming in sight;
Helmets gleaming, on, on, they came
Wave upon wave yet always the same
And all the armies of days gone by
Came up to me and passed me by
And the noble deeds of the days of yore
Came with the white caps to the shore.

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